

**Interview with Barbara Mosgrave  
conducted by Linda Byrne for the  
Providence District History Project Providence Perspective**

**May 29, 2009**

**Linda:** Today is May 29, 2009, my name is Linda Byrne and I am sitting in the office of Supervisor Linda Smyth with Barbara Mosgrave for the purposes of an interview for the Providence Perspective History Project. Good afternoon Barbara.

**Barbara:** And good afternoon to you.

**Linda:** Thank you and would you start with your full name and history?

**Barbara:** My Name is Barbara Mosgrave I grew up in Western PA, most specifically Pittsburgh and I moved here after doing some graduate work and coming down here to work at Wolf Trap.

**Linda:** What was your graduate work in?

**Barbara:** Clinical Psychology all the way, no I am sorry I have some undergraduate work in Journalism too. Then I did my Post Op in Psycho Farm or funny drugs.

**Linda:** Tell me a little about that.

**Barbara:** That was something I did to amuse myself and I also play Championship Bridge around the clock. I do things like that. But, I moved down here I had been advertising managing for a firm in Pittsburg, and it turns out that every other year they would get rid of the females on the Executive Staff so in one of those breaks I came down here to work for the American Symphony Orchestra League and it was located on the grounds of Wolf Trap.

**Linda:** Now what kind of time period are you talking about with women being pushed out of positions?

**Barbara:** Now let's see, I would be talking about the late 1960's we still didn't have too many rights at that point. It was really interesting because I worked for

this company a large company and we had our production plant in Pittsburgh but I guess it was funny from one stand point or another but the guys the Executive Vice President to the CEO all gathered after hours and had a few drinks and played cards. Well, I had to be invited in even though I was an Executive, I had to be invited in, into the room to have a drink. I could just not walk in like the men did. In a way I think it is funny that it is only 40 years ago and I think my God, it is 40 years ago.

**Linda:** Have times changed?

**Barbara:** Well I went FED for a long time but yes there is still discrimination, no doubt about it.

**Linda:** In the Federal Government?

**Barbara:** Yes, but it is just not as overt. I am a computer person and women stand a pretty good chance there but to the top of the level, not really let's be honest. I have a lot of highway experience. And then what is strange is they used a female to test whether or not I could fit into the equipment, whether or not I could do some of the job.

**Linda:** So this is operating equipment for highways?

**Barbara:** Oh yes.

**Linda:** Interesting.

**Barbara:** I am a specialist in signs, such as warning signs because of my ergonomic training, my psych training and I use the ergonomics of it.

**Linda:** Now explain how you do that.

**Barbara:** Well you measure how far someone can see from one sign to the next and I put on quite a few miles for the Federal Highway based in major cities around the country and smaller cities because there are three classes. It was fun

to see what signs could be read at what distance and how well people behaved in the morning rush as opposed to the evening rush, there are two distinct differences.

**Linda:** What are they?

**Barbara:** Well in the morning if you get stuck, it is okay so you are five minutes late. In the evening don't get in anyone's way because they have a gotta get home to or, and they are not friendly about it. I learned a lot about it the hard way.

**Linda:** That is where road rage comes in?

**Barbara:** Oh yes, I learned a lot about it in Denver which was the first place I saw it and that is supposed to be a pretty chilled city. They don't even think about it and it was pretty funny to watch.

**Linda:** Okay, let's go back. You moved here from Pittsburgh...

**Barbara:** Yes, I moved from Pittsburgh and the first place I saw was Woodburn and it wasn't even occupied on the site I live in, now Woodburn Village Condominium Association – it was rental at the time. The great part was it had trees all around it at the time and I had lived in a very urban part of Pittsburgh and I thought that was pretty neat but then I came down here and saw the trees and I thought that was so nice. In Pittsburgh I had lived a half block from the fire station, a half block from Shadyside Hospital which is now doing a lot with the University of Pittsburgh. In the meantime I came down here and thought this is pretty neat and only then realized that there was Fairfax Hospital on one side of me and the fire trucks came up Woodburn Road on a regular basis and the helicopters came in and they were having, every four minutes they had an arrival from somewhere.

**Linda:** And this is to the hospital, a trauma case.

**Barbara:** Yes. I thought damn, I didn't think I was moving into that kind of situation. I guess I didn't check too well.

**Linda:** So was the noise a problem?

**Barbara:** Yes, and that was before we had cable because I have been here for 39 ½ years now. In the early days a helicopter would come in and reset, because we didn't have cable, it would reset any one of the VCR's and it would be funny because you would go home in the evening and say you would watch such and such that was on during the day. Well you might have anything imaginable because low and behold because of the helicopters it wasn't that way anymore. The helicopters and some of the emergency equipment would just throw out a signal that would throw off these VCR's.

**Linda:** So times have changed and we now have cable.

**Barbara:** And Satellite and that is not much of a problem now.

**Linda:** So were you commuting into the District when you first arrived here?

**Barbara:** No I was commuting up to Wolf Trap.

**Linda:** How was that commute at that time?

**Barbara:** It was 15 minutes from my place up to Wolf Trap. I had one traffic light from my place up to Rt. 50. Now of course there are five or six and you had to pray anytime you came to the top of Woodburn Road you had to make a left turn onto Gallows. I am not trying to mock any religion or anything else but years ago I had someone from the Fair Trades say you know these things will make religion. Anyone would get religion over this. You would get there and of course you would have to peer around because it was only two lanes wide at the time and now it is five or six in a lot of places and you would have to make a left turn without any light. There were no lights until you got up to Rt. 50 and from there I could get up to Tyson's Corner without a light. Now of course there are lights everywhere. Here a light, there a light, everywhere a light, light. I could get out there in 15 minutes and now it takes 15 minutes to get up to Rt. 50 or whatever it would happen to be. Rt. 7, well that is a disaster but that is not part of Merrifield.

**Linda:** Give me your address, I didn't ask you this.

**Barbara:** 8308 Tobin Road, number 33 in Annandale and we are in that crazy section of Annandale that is the very tippy top of that zip code and we touch the hospital that is technically Falls Church even though it is immediately next door. The mail box is on the other side of the road, you probably know that story.

**Linda:** No I don't.

**Barbara:** Oh! When Fairfax Hospital, the yellow brick building with the round rotunda was first built somebody took a mailbox on a stake and went over and put it on the other side of Gallows Road because the beltway wasn't even in place then, keep that in mind. So they put in a mailbox and Gallows Road was the dividing line therefore; Fairfax Hospital is located in Falls Church, one of those things a little trivia around here. And then we have of course that Merrifield is developed and Merrifield goes down and touches the other side and Fairfax so I am surrounded by everything.

**Linda:** Do you consider that a convenience now that you are convenient to everything?

**Barbara:** That is one of the reasons I chose the place to start with I did feel that way, I still feel that way although the next five years may change my mind with what they are doing with the hot lanes and widening the bridges. When I testified last week I said that I was looking for someone who would relocate me for five years because they are talking about routing the traffic off the Beltway and down Gallows Road and back out again when they widen some of the bridges. That is going to be I don't know what because Gallows Road is a real access from there, egress and access.

**Linda:** Tell me more about your career and life's work.

**Barbara:** Oh that is a funny thing. I never wanted to practice clinical psychology. I did it for a crazy reason. I went from there because I had the J School and I really wanted to be a practicing Journalist and women weren't doing too well. Pauline Fredericks who lives not too far from where my parents had their home, was the

first woman to make Network TV and that's only because all the network reporters were at a political convention. Something had happened, I don't recall what it was, but they put her on the air she was the first woman.

Barbara Walters wrote something rather decent to me in her book the other night when she signed it for me I have know her for many years 40 plus. They were really my heroes because they actually made it but I was told, even though I worked summers on a newspaper and during my school years I wrote for whatever the town or city paper would be, you really should go into advertising because there isn't much for a woman.

So, I had my time in advertising and I was doing volunteer work for the Pittsburgh Symphony I did some of their drives and when I found out I really needed to get out of Pittsburgh because this company had their woman for a year and they now they would go another year without a woman. I got in touch with a friend at the Pittsburgh Symphony and it turned out he was the head or CEO or whatever of the American Orchestra Symphony League located on what is Wolf Trap and Sid went ahead and made the connection. They flew me down and I said why not and that is how it happened purely not by planning it all happened within a week's time. The packing didn't but everything else did and I came down and I did that but in the meantime I was dating a man who was what, Head of Manpower Research and Development for the American Psychiatric Association and he said we need a survey done and you have the credentials for it. So, I was doing their data collection on psychiatrists and what they do with their time.

**Linda:** What do they do with their time?

**Barbara:** It is very interesting because at that time, and remember it was at that time a lot of them were still donating a lot of services. I think they still do because there are a lot of people who can't pay their bills, or who can't afford to.

When I realized that I could not take the lead, I don't know if this should be off the record or not, but there were two women who were there to cover for their

drunken husbands. They worked there but nevertheless, were always polluted. It was just a rotten place to be.

Kay Shouse and I were friends and I had done a big labeling program for Filene's in Boston and when I arrived she beat it right across the road to talk to me. She said that she had wanted to meet me because I know what you did for Filene's, because that had been one of my clients for the company I worked for in Pittsburgh. She (Kay) was a perfect delight. I would have lunch with her down at the F Street Club and do all of those really neat things.

**Linda:** Tell about her and her donation to Wolf Trap.

**Barbara:** Well that is an interesting story and I don't want to put Kay down for an instant but if you know Chandler Pavilion in Los Angeles okay that was Buffett and we had the one in Cleveland and we had all the others and they were all her pals and so it seemed the donor thing to do...

**Linda:** Yes, that is interesting that we would not know that.

**Barbara:** No, Cleveland has and I can't think of the name of it but a wonderful summer music program and that was another one of her friends and of course Buster May of May Department Stores. We could go right down the line, Emma Lazarus of Lazarus Federated Department Stores we had all of these people running around there all of the time. The Meyerhof's who would come down from Baltimore for events and Pat Nixon would come out and help in a helicopter from the White House. It was an interesting existing, I can't say it was fun it was an interesting existence.

**Linda:** And what years would that have been?

**Barbara:** Late 69 for about a year and a half. And then I decided, you know, I was making enough money with the American Psychiatric Association and I really couldn't take the drunks. The whole support system in there was very hard to take and the Executive Director was a drunk, and he only showed up on occasion. And I was always suppose to call the White House or something to get him a

special seating whatever because after all he was President of the American Symphony Orchestra League. Well you know what - there are a lot of Presidents in this town and his wife Ermadell, from Kentucky, would get very upset if they did not have the proper thing. But meantime I did get to use the Presidential Box at Kennedy Center when he wasn't working when he didn't go – and things like that it was Washington at its most fun.

**Linda:** Right, those interesting little perks.

**Barbara:** Yes.

**Linda:** What have you found in living in Fairfax County as far as - I know you do a lot of volunteer work in your area – what have you found as far as Government in relationship to the needs of Fairfax County.

**Barbara:** Well I had been a FED for so long and was really hatched and the day I retired I signed on to do a political campaign for a man in Alexandria who was working for the State, I mean as a State Delegate and that was really the first I got into Virginia politics. Then after that was followed Fairfax politics. I love politics.

When I had been in State College University Park Pennsylvania, I had worked for an Ad agency and had done political campaigns for a number of people where I had to come up with their platform, they didn't even know their platforms and I was a little disgusted with that. But, on the other hand I love politics and to be at the Federal level and then to be, you know that Fairfax County is bigger than some of these States, this to me was just fun.

I still don't understand the whole Richmond set up although I know most of the players, at least the players from Northern Virginia; I think I know them all. Once I got into Fair Housing and because I know the work, I should back up and say when Woodburn Village went Condominium the man who was the developer for that chose a few people and said I think you are meant for this and sent us off to some very exclusive training on what a community association is all about. That backed up with my training when I was in the government on the infrastructure of a town just made such sense to me, it just kind of clicked. So I found it so interesting and so rewarding and I am sorry that in the last couple of years it has really drained



down now and I am still doing some work, no question but we no longer have the very active task force that we had for Fair Housing. I got involved in Fair Housing for another reason and it is one of these silly ass reasons. I have an arthritic hand and I wanted a door lever on my front door and because I was on the board at the time and the Community Association Institute (CAI) things like that, I knew that I was allowed to do it because they wouldn't dare go against me because that would be a Fair Housing Violation, but nevertheless our Association tried to give me trouble our attorney, some idiot, wrote me some nasty letters.

**Linda:** And this was just to help your hand in opening the door.

**Barbara:** All I wanted was a lever and I was going to pay for it myself but I had to deal with the Commonwealth of Virginia because there was nothing else around. So I dealt with them and of course it went through and Woodburn got their fingers slapped on that one.

One day I got a phone call from a person, I can't remember who but it doesn't matter and she said Barbara I have to ask but please don't get angry with me and I said what is up. She asked me if I had any other levers or doorknobs inside your condo. I said I have all levers do you want me to take pictures and send them to you? She said, no that is not necessary I was just required to ask you, I apologize and I said not a problem.

Then within a few months time, it may have been a year but I don't think so it turned out that Fairfax County wanted their own Fair Housing and I was used as the Prime Example. So I went out and testified before the Board, Kate was still running things at that time (Kate Handley) and I talked about the cost of having to fax all of this information to Richmond on a very regular basis because that is how we went back and forth. As I sat down, Kate who was always very formal, looks at me and says Barbara how many fax machines do you have? And I said three, I still remember that. But we got a Fair Housing Committee out of that – we got a Fair Housing office out of that.

**Linda:** So instead of the State now you have the County and how has that helped?

**Barbara:** I think it has helped because if someone, let's say one of my neighbors who doesn't know the whole plan, or doesn't have the at home office that I have wants to file something they can do it with a local phone number. All of my calls to Richmond were not on an 800 number so I was paying that. I mean this isn't a big deal but it's just the idea I had to cover those costs. If I had gone out to Kinkos or somewhere to fax it that would have been \$1.20 or something like that a page. And I said this isn't right. How do some people maneuver the system? And I was so proud when we got something going in Fairfax County so it is a local call if they have to fax things. In this area there are very few people who don't have it on their computer so they can fax things. But they can still go to Kinko's or they can drive out to the Government Center.

**Linda:** So give me an example of a Fair Housing issue of problem or a person with a particular interesting case.

**Barbara:** Well we can go back to my door lever. But beyond that if you go out and test some of these places that have all these rentals because it is only going to show up on a big community. But one person that is under the radar; but I went out to several and would say I have a mobility issue and I want to be on a level, unless you have an elevator unless there are gardens. And they would either want to take me downstairs to see the model or the model was either upstairs or downstairs but they weren't on the level. And of course you can turn those in and they get their little fingers at least slapped.

Another thing that I have found that I find so particularly repulsive is where you have a handicapped parking space, you wouldn't believe how many of those are built over gutters so that the person who is there with a walker, or sticks could very well go into the slots in the gutter. This is fair - hell no - and sometimes people have to have a little consciousness raising.

**Linda:** Um hum.

**Barbara:** So it's that sort of thing and I really get caught up in that. Probably if I dumped my camera right now you could see all sorts of pictures because I see those and that's just a click.

**Linda:** If you find something today what do you do, where do you go?

**Barbara:** Well right now since Fair Housing isn't very active there have been times that I have been able to do something quietly with Housing Urban Development (HUD) this is probably not for the record but I have done things like that. Well in Falls Church City when they wanted to do the Cash for Kids the program where the condominiums were going in and the developer, they were all two bedroom units you weren't going to put too many kinds in a two bedroom unit and under the fire code you were going to get four people at the most. Well the hearings for that started at exactly midnight and now you and I both now that is not fair and just not kosher. They should have started much earlier and what they did was all the town business before that and I was reporting to HUD that night for that night and we got it turned around but the city said no and you are just going to have to pay extra for every child you send for these condominiums is what they were coming down on the developer for and happily I have a decent reputation and I could say this is what I picked up last night here in my notes da da da da da.

We have things like that and it is I don't want to say rewarding it is not that it is just come on we all want to live on this planet let's not make it any worse than we have to, I can't do anything about traffic jams but I can pick up some of these other things.

**Linda:** What do you do for fun?

**Barbara:** Oh that is part of it I am a jeweler you know.

**Linda:** I didn't know. You are wearing a beautiful necklace is that something you made?

**Barbara:** No, this cost me \$3.00. I was at a friend's place and he was clearing out some stock and I asked how much and bought it. But I make some very good

stones, well I don't make the stones obviously, they are natural and I do some custom work for a particular department store in this area a national store and I also do an awful lot of pearls for the various medical societies and people know they can get good work and decent prices from me and they don't have to pay the overhead of a store.

**Linda:** Do you work in gold or silver?

**Barbara:** I don't, my lungs are too bad for the gold and silver I can't use flame but I can do the designs and I have a Goldsmith.

**Linda:** Wonderful, how long have you been doing this?

**Barbara:** I try to remember, I think about twenty years.

**Linda:** In order to do that did you have to take a Gemology Course or do you just naturally have the talent.

**Barbara:** Both. It started in a very strange way. A friend of mine was given a strand of Jade by a friend of hers who had gone to China and Lee had sent her a strand of Jade. She said and now what am I going to do with this and Lou Bond was still over at Barcroft Plaza and I said that Lou Bond teaches classes so why don't you go take one and she thought that was pretty neat and said okay. Then what I heard what Lou Bond was charging and found that the County was also giving class at that time taught by Star McGiven was something like \$12.00 so I went over to Star's class and she looked at me and said Barbara you know how to do everything why are you here? I said well I don't know how to do this and this, just two little tricks and she said why didn't you just ask me.

So I took the class and as far as stones go I rely very heavily on some very good dealers that I have and beyond that I am Gem Institute of America (GIA). I am also a medical writer, but anyway.

**Linda:** Wonderful. Tell me about the medical writing.

**Barbara:** That is just something I have been doing for a long, long, long, long time.

**Linda:** And, as a medical writer what do you write about?

**Barbara:** Whatever a particular M.D., needs because I work primarily for one or two major medical schools. It started out it was only psychiatry because I was working so much with the psychiatrists and then it blossomed into some other things.

**Linda:** Interesting. Tell me more about Fairfax County and the changes that you've seen. Also I think you were mentioning before we started recording Merrifield and how it got its name.

**Barbara:** I just learned this last night I was talking to a friend and said Merrifield and she told the story – she said do you know how Merrifield got started? And she's a woman who has run some TV shows in the area. I said no I really haven't, I know how Gallows Road got its name obviously but not Merrifield.

Well Merrifield had a name and had a spot on the map but it was an eensy teensy spot, as they tend to be in Fairfax County. But there was a farm because Annandale was the primary farm area for the county at that time. Annandale I guess going out probably towards Tyson's because there was still a horse farm up here on Gallows Road where they now have townhouses right beyond Merrifield Garden. But apparently there was a big farm over where the Multiplex is and some poor cow was sitting under a tree on day, or standing under a tree I don't know if they sit and there was a stroke of lightening and said cow was killed. It then went on the news that this cow was killed in Merrifield, Virginia and that was in the 1940's I think. And that is when it actually went onto the map. It was no more than a teeny tiny little spot and I remember when there was just a post office instead of the big regional one we have now. It was a little counter in a hardware store.

**Linda:** Was it in the same location it is now?

**Barbara:** It was about where the Market Tire store is now or very nearby and then they started building this monster.

**Linda:** Well you have seen a lot of changes here over what 30 or 40 years that you have been here, talk about those.

**Barbara:** Forty years. Well I tried to think about it I put it into different categories. Obviously growth, the loss of tress and I have become a tree hugger as I said at the hearing the other night. I have really become very possessive of every tree and don't you dare touch it. But so much of it is related to transportation as I said before when I would come up Woodburn Road I would have to make a left onto Gallows. I remember a traffic count that was done soon after I came here and they had 1,700 cars a day and now I am certain they have more than 1,700 an hour, it is that simple. Some of that changed when the Exxon Mobile proffer was made .

**Linda:** What was that proffer?

**Barbara:** Well the proffer was that they would have their own exit from the Beltway and their own entrance because when I came you could only get off when you came South, you could get up and get off on Gallows or you could go South on Gallows but you could not go North. At one point it was taking me and I was working at Beltsville at the time and it took me twenty minutes to get from my place over to the Rt. 50 Exit. Now of course all I have to do is go up to the top of the street and make a left and get on the Beltway.

**Linda:** That saves you about a mile in distance but a lot in time because of the traffic and lights.

**Barbara:** Although heaven knows how long that is going to last. Of course we had the over under thing at Rt. 50 and Gallows so there was such a change there and then we had the Yorktown Shopping center and that was a giant, so on and so forth and we got a traffic light in there and it was a disaster otherwise because when you came away from the Giant Shopping Center you had to make a left, here again you got religion, you would go down the street down Gallows again. It is funny to see how that has grown because there weren't even traffic lights in between there and now there are so many. Now of course we have that huge condominium thing those two buildings up at the top of Gallows and Lee but in

the meantime we lost Johnston's Auto Body that darling little place which I first thought was a Swiss Restaurant or something of that sort because it was this little building with all these sorts of flowers on it with all this and all that. Now it has come down all together.

**Linda:** On the corner of Lee Highway and Gallows Road, yes it had some artwork on it.

**Barbara:** Mrs. Johnston I understand liked that and after she died her husband still kept it up but not as well and then when he died his son Wayne did a little bit more but not much.

**Linda:** Somebody told me that the artwork that had been on for so many years was updated maybe in the 1970's but they did not like the update as much as the original.

**Barbara:** True. Oh yes, little gardens hanging off the building a wild place, a cute place.

**Linda:** Yes, are there any other places like that you remember?

**Barbara:** Well when you recognize what was an A&P (a chain grocery store) just down the street from that it was part of that shopping center that A&P was turned into an Asian Market.

**Linda:** So we are seeing a more diverse community?

**Barbara:** Well if you look at the Yorktown Shopping Center at the intersection of Rt. 50 and Gallows that Giant (chain grocery store), not the biggest but that Giant that is Asian style now with great produce, I am not knocking it but I mean to go from a store that was red, white and blue, two stores were red, white and blue to Asian you go oh my God it has really changed. But we did lose our dirty book store. We had a porn book store at the Yorktown Shopping Center.

**Linda:** Oh no! I never knew about that, at which shopping center?

**Barbara:** Yorktown, it was in the back and one day I walked in there not knowing, it was a bookstore so I went in and back in the corner were these men who were

standing there reading these books and there was a little room behind that, it was a really racy one I gather and I would recognize my neighbors and it was really fun (laughing). I guess I don't know whether if it is interesting or a sign of the times I guess it is really both but I have listed here all of the different changes on Gallows Road because it was a two lane and now it is a four or six on each side.

**Linda:** What are those changes on your list?

**Barbara:** Well I have listed the traffic stuff and coming up from Woodburn like this Tobin goes straight down, I am technically on Tobin Road although I don't really go on Tobin Road in Virginia. I knew we needed a traffic light there because I was right over it and I could hear the cars crash particularly on week end nights and at three in the morning I am calling 911 and they are asking me if anyone was injured. Well, I couldn't see. I was on the top floor looking down and I would call the rescue and they would come. I would say we need a traffic light we have got to have a traffic light. I guess Kate was still on the Board because I came with my testimony, they were going to do the Ronald McDonald Center and so I got busy and went up to the Government Center and was prepared to testify. Gerry Connolly got me on one side and Jim Scott got me on the other and said Barbara what are you doing? Why would you testify against Ronald McDonald? I said we need a traffic light and I will testify against anything that goes on over there by the hospital until I get my traffic light. Got my traffic light and now that has made it possible for all kinds of traffic to come up the little road, Woodburn Road, Tobin Road and get up to the corner.

**Linda:** Tell me about your interaction with County Government has that been successful for the most part?

**Barbara:** I think so but I don't know if everyone would say the same thing. Certainly when I was on the Tenant Landlord I didn't think so. That was a disaster and I didn't stay as you probably know. That was sad. Here were these people talking about Tenant Landlord when we were supposed to be meeting on this and all we really got was four pages of paper and it was ten years old.

**Linda:** And this was a committee for the county?



**Barbara:** Yes it was a county committee and we were supposed to proof read this word by word and sometimes there was a word with a space and a period. We then we had to have a vote whether the period went with the word so I quit. I mean I have other things to do with my life I could have done that less than five minutes on the computer. I wasn't going to waste my time with that. So that was my experience with that. I am over in Herrity a lot because of the traffic.

**Linda:** The Herrity Building?

**Barbara:** Yes because of the parking. I am very good with parking, I know all the rules, 8 ½ wide by 22 long and must stay within the white lines, blah, blah, blah. And of course disability services over in the other building, I can't think of it.

**Linda:** Benito Building?

**Barbara:** Yes that is it, Martha's building. That has been interesting. I think Gerry was still here; no I am sorry he was Chair of the Board at that point because I was appointed and I think there was somebody over in Annandale that did not think I was really disabled because he was on sticks, and I wasn't. There is such a hierarchy among the disability community so he wanted me kicked off and I know that it was Gerry who said if you kick her off I will reappoint her and by the way you will not be allowed to kick her off.

**Linda:** Very good.

**Barbara:** So that is how that went. Some of my other notes I have, if I am not distracting you from your line of question.

**Linda:** No, go ahead.

**Barbara:** As I say most of this is really about the growth or how Gallows Road changed. It has changed so much because they had to recurve it and so on and so forth to get a distance in an exit from the Beltway to a legal exit at Gallows Road. There are firm federal standards so they had to wrap around and it was a little interesting. A lot of people did not understand that was part of the Proffer and they thought that the Highway Department decided to do that for us, sure!

I told you about the horse farm that is now townhouses and the changes to the grocery stores and then the old Roy Rogers that became everything that is now Arby's, my darling Johnston's Auto Body and the dirty book store. That was just cute because we really cleaned up the area. The drive in movie became the multiplex. Channel 10 came in with the Proffer on getting cable TV in Fairfax County and the postal service that was a small counter and is now of course the big thing with the engineering center for all the Postal services and I have written trees in capital letters.

**Linda:** Interesting. Tell me a little more about trees. Some of the research for this project shows that in the 1940's there were these farms that had milk cows and the milk was provided into the District of Columbia and as the fields where the cows grazed became overgrown, are those the trees we are seeing now?

**Barbara:** Well, for example when they did the wraparound what I call the over under at Rt. 50 and Gallows Road they cleaned out the trees on both, well one side had the shopping center over where Sweetwater and so forth is beautiful trees and they were all just wiped out. I came home one day and they were missing. Over where the high rise has office buildings where the University of Phoenix and I don't know what else is, was wiped out. Now I went out, who did I meet with, he was the attorney who had been with the Zoning Commission, he was out in Fairfax City and he said well do you know what they have planned for there? No I didn't. They had planned for 11 buildings although that had included the inside parking garage. Well it stayed at six buildings but nevertheless that is what had been planned and I have a drawing on it. But that is what they put up there and they put Willow Oak Center up there for, well it was for a variety of things is a mental health well soon is a mental health center and is to be similar to the one they have on Route 1, I guess, I hope. Anyhow that was a beautiful treed area and every one of them was cut, I really felt I don't know if it was my old girl scout training or what but felt and I took this very, very hard.

**Linda:** I don't have any other questions but I am sure you have other thoughts you would like to share with people that might be moving to Providence District in the future.

**Barbara:** I still think it is an excellent location we are very close to Metro and I did not mention Metro that has had a major impact of course. We have all these services and there is no way to really adequately describe the hospital but with it, all the auxiliary services that come in. We have the sleep center the this, the that ,and the other thing, the radiologist, the physical therapy that has been built. Both on my street there have are three medical buildings there and that has its own funny story. And then what is out on Rt. 50 and I am certain there are a lot of other buildings around that has some of the other services. When you look at the health care services there it is remarkable, it was very remarkable to me because they could not diagnose it when I was having heart attacks and I had to go into the city, I had six heart attacks and Fairfax Hospital missed every damn one of them. So I am not as kind about that as I could be but I recognize the potential and what is there. When they built the Heart Vascular right across from me I just cursed and cursed and cursed, like they were trying to remind me every day but that is the way it is.

But the impact of all of that, the number of helicopters that come in every day, the cars that bring patients in and the cars that people drive themselves the mental health center all the facilities there, the Ronald McDonald House (although I was going to testify against it, they took my testimony). They have child care for people who work in the hospital. There is a fantastic infrastructure there plus all the doctors who are needed to take care of the services, their offices. So there are certainly health care services there, I wonder how good sometimes.

The Asian Market that has gone in I find to be fantastic. Am I buying boxed goods there, no but I don't buy that much in boxed goods, I am a scratch cook and I can go in there and get all kinds of produce and at very good prices and they have wonderful fresh seafood and they have some other cuts of meat and I would say in smaller portions that you would usually find at Giant or Safeway that still think we are a family of eight and we aren't.

There is so much housing available and again it is not so much as the McMansions it is more tailored to the individual or the second marriage or the people who are starting over or whatever and I think that is a great feature. Some of these places you really expect them to live in a four bedrooms and Merrifield is not like that. By the way when I came to town I had been the leader of Girl Scout one senior troop. I came here and they would not let me lead a troop because, what do you mean you want to have a meeting in the evening, they have to be after school and I said I was sorry but I was working. They questioned me, you are working? What does your husband do? I don't have a husband and they treated me as though I was some sort of child molester and God knows what else. Well Linda, it wasn't that way at all, it was strictly I had been leader of Girl Scout 1 and was very acceptable that I was a professional woman leading Girl Scout 1 and Girl Scouts had always been very important to me but here I was some sort of piranha

**Linda:** How awful.

**Barbara:** I know. Since then they have altered their thinking but you know I am not about to now, not after that.

**Linda:** Well what do you look forward to during retirement?

**Barbara:** I don't know if I will ever totally retire. I am happy as a volunteer I have an adequate income if such a thing is possible with the cost of food and gas going up. When I wanted a car two years ago I admit I had been at an Embassy party, there were just a few of us there and I met the President of Renault who was leaving Renault and going over to Nissan because he always had these great small cars I asked and he said yes he was taking a car with him, I knew he would and I said I want it and I got the first one in the United States but it was driven in I could not get it from a dealer here.

**Linda:** Do you still have that car?

**Barbara:** Oh yes. It is a year and a half, no next month it will be two years old.

**Linda:** What kind of gas mileage do you get?

**Barbara:** About 30 to 33 mpg.

**Linda:** Great, that is wonderful.

**Barbara:** It has the continuous variable transmission, CVT. I could drop the back on it the other night and put in an 80" door that I picked up at Lowes. It is just very handy dandy and does what I want. It gets me from here to there economically and it is fun to drive, or I should say it is fun to drive and has other attributes.

**Linda:** Well I thank you for this interview and if you think of anything else that you would like to share?

**Barbara:** I guess it is the change in the store fronts. To me it is really the loss of the trees? I had lived in a very urban area in Pittsburg and I came down here and there were trees all around me and I thought oh this is terrific, well guess what the trees were cut.

**Linda:** That makes a big impact.

**Barbara:** Yes and the good part of it for me was the Beltway had just opened and a lot of people were unaccustomed to using it and I went from Wolftrap over to Beltsville to do marketing research for a major company and I could do that drive in 25 minutes and that is kind of funny because it takes that long to get across the American Legion Bridge these days.

**Linda:** Yes it is double the time and if you have rush hour traffic it is triple the time.

**Barbara:** I had just started working there and there was a morning when a frozen food truck had overturned on the Beltway at 3:00 a.m. in the morning and they had not put out any news announcements or any signs or tried to stop anyone from getting onto the Beltway so it was a solid stop around the Beltway. I was one of the people who got caught of course or I would not be mentioning this and because I had done such things as drive the Commission of Public Safety in Pennsylvania and so forth I had a notion of how to handle this and I got in touch with the State Police and said you know you will announce these things, you will. This is not a maybe you want to, this needs to be done and I cited the reasons for

it but coming home that day, and by the way they have done much better since, but coming home that day and this was the day that George Wallace was shot in Laurel and it had the Beltway all messed up because you could not go by Holy Cross Hospital so I had to go up into Maryland and back down. So yes I have been through some of those things and I know how to get them announced and cleared up and I have always been an activist.

**Linda:** That is great and I hope you continue to be an activist.

**Barbara:** So do I, so do I.

**Linda:** Thank you.

**[Interview paused]**

**Linda:** This is a continuation of the interview with Barbara Mosgrave.

**Barbara:** I was talking about the Robey farm simply because I live at the intersection of Woodburn and Tobin, because Woodburn curves and Tobin goes straight and where it curves there had been the Robey farm on one side and it goes down as far as I guess it is Robey Avenue and went up I think almost to Gallows Road we are very close to that.

At one point, and I know the grandson, the old man the grandfather was approached by the county the county wanted to buy the land and buy the farm for the schools because they suspected they would need it for the schools in there and there was going to be this great hedge against inflation. As I understand it as soon as the sale was completed the one son who was quite bright and his father talked and probably some attorneys were there, I don't know and they promptly sued the county for taking away his source of income because he had been a farmer.

The actuaries got busy and figured out how long he would live and they paid him off in those days handsomely, I mean for that time handsomely, the story goes

and the one son took his share of the money and became First Vice President of Virginia Bank.

**Linda:** Interesting.

**Barbara:** Meantime the grandfather died within six months, he dropped over so, so much for the actuary tables. So the school had won part of it and the rest was given over to the Park and Planning because we have garden plots there now. The soccer field above that it came to be if I recall the story because they needed a place to dump the land they were digging out over at Mobile, the ground they were digging out there, and took it over and leveled out the field and turned it into the soccer field and have a long term lease with the State. I just thought that was one of the little bits of lore of this area.

And of course across from, what I still call the Robey farm across from garden plots. They put in a Russian Orthodox Church and there was a big hoopla there about how they plan to have these bells ring because everyone in the congregation wanted to hear the bells ring.

So I personally because I am an activist knew I would get the bells straight up in my place, and their attorneys shared this with me in advance went over there and counted and of course the license plates came from all over and this is when we still had county stickers on them. They really came from all over the area including Maryland and so forth because there are only three Russian Orthodox Churches in the area. So I testified, fortunately after everyone said well I live in Springfield and I really enjoy this and I live in Chantilly and I really enjoy this blah blah blah. I said I know you come from all over because I have been over there looking at your license plates and this is very true but you know I live right there as do 605 other units where I live and a lot of us work at home and have home offices, I don't think I used that first I think I talked about the babies. You know you have to be politically correct and the number of people who work shifts and to have these bells ringing five times a day plus weddings and wakes was going to be a little bit much.

It was funny because the Planning Commission and whoever sat on it from our area, I would like to go after that person, looked astonished because they were obviously unfamiliar with that and the attorney had only presented the thing up to Tobin Road where on the other side some neighbors had come to hear this and they had never thought to speak up. But anyway the Planning Commission afterward, buzz buzz buzz and admitted that well yes they really should have curtailed the sound on those bells, the number of decibels and the amount of time. I didn't really want to be awakened every morning at eight o'clock because they wanted to hear bells particularly since they didn't live in the area and I did.

Now they don't have the money to build a bell tower so I guess it is sort of a moot issue but we have had all of those changes but that church has grown from a very tiny little thing into a very large thing and is planned to get far larger.

They have a great day care center there and those things. I guess I would think there too that the rules at my Association because you are not suppose to have day care. But the reality is that there is so much need for day care because there are so many working mothers that day care is really a necessary thing and as long as someone doesn't disobey too many of the rules we let it go by as I am sure a lot of other Associations do.

I guess down the way Strathmeade Townhouses were built about the same time as we were within a month or two. But down below there, I just happened to be going down towards Athen Park one day and I realized they have all sorts of detached houses down there and all kinds of detached houses on the other side. That is another time that you see growth and you know the trees went down but that is the sort of thing; but the Robey farm is always the favorite story particularly since the grandson was a photographer and there was a beautiful tree out there and he liked to take pictures of naked ladies hugging the tree. Unfortunately there was some poison ivy there and John called me one day and said what do you do for poison ivy? I asked him how he knew about poison ivy and I got the story. As I said that is just part of the favorite stories.



**Linda:** Great, well thank you.